

Office of the Commissioner of Railroads

DRAFT Surrebuttal of City of Madison

Petition of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for the Establishment of a Public Crossing of the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad, LLC Tracks with Wagon Trail Pathway in the City of Madison, Dane County

Docket 9170-RX-316

April 29, 2016

1 **Q. Please state your name.**

2 A. My name is Lisa A. Stern, P.E.

3 **Q. What is the purpose of your additional testimony?**

4 A. I have reviewed the rebuttal materials submitted by WSOR on April 15, 2016 in response
5 to Petitioner's and the City's original testimony. The purpose of my current testimony is to
6 provide additional detail in the evaluation of the sight distance at the proposed crossing
7 and to provide WisDOT's position on how this crossing would affect trespassing on this
8 corridor.

9 **Q. Are you sponsoring any new Exhibits?**

10 A. No.

11 **Q. What additional information would you like to add on the sight distances at the**
12 **proposed crossing?**

13 A. The direct testimony I provided for this crossing addressed the distance along the track
14 that was required for a pedestrian and a bicycle traveling at 20 mph. I would like to add
15 information on the sight distance required along the highway and to address the sources
16 of this information. In the American Association of State Highway and Transportation
17 Officials' (AASHTO's) "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities" 2012, Fourth

1 Addition and the “Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Manual” it is recommended that the
2 design speed of 18 mph be used for paths in relatively flat areas, with grades less than
3 2%. The analysis submitted by WSOR’s consultant used a design speed of 25 mph to
4 evaluate the sight distances at the proposed crossing and the stopping sight distance
5 calculated for shared pathways, which was a range of 175 – 225 feet.

6 The route for the bicyclist from the north will include a mix of roadway and
7 pathway. Each route type has a separate equation to calculate the needed stopping sight
8 distance, one in the Bicycle Facilities Manual developed for shared pathways and the
9 other using AASHTO’s “A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets”
10 specifically developed for at-grade railroad-highway crossings. In using the shared
11 pathway equation for stopping sight distance, 133 feet is needed, for the at-grade crossing
12 equation for stopping sight distance, 118 feet from the near rail is needed for the
13 proposed crossing. Using these stopping sight distances the projected sight distance
14 could be provided with the appropriate clearing since no buildings would be in the way.
15 However, it would be appropriate to consider stop control versus yield signs at this
16 crossing due to vegetation currently located on the private properties on the north and the
17 shorter approach distance from the intersection with the main pathway on the south side.

18 Also, the report provided by WSOR referenced the note that “bicyclists traveling
19 on sidepaths are apt to cross intersections and driveways at unexpected speeds (i.e.
20 speeds that are significantly faster than pedestrian speeds). This may increase likelihood
21 of crashes, especially where sight distance is limited.” Although this statement is true, it
22 is not applicable to this proposed crossing. It is in reference to a sidepath, which is
23 defined as a shared use path adjacent to roadways, similar to a sidewalk, this proposed

1 path alignment is on independent right of way and does not parallel a roadway. The
2 portion to the north would be considered an on-road facility.

3 **Q. What do you believe would be the impacts of this proposed crossing to public safety**
4 **issues including trespassing issues along this portion of the rail corridor?**

5 A. WisDOT agrees that trespassing on and along railroad corridors is a significant safety
6 issue in the state. To have the greatest impact in improving trespassing issues and related
7 safety issues control of the pedestrian and bicyclist's pathways must be taken. There is a
8 need for safe, controlled, public railroad crossings in any developed areas, and the lack of
9 such crossings in appropriate locations can result in serious negative safety impacts, not
10 simply user inconvenience. In the area of this proposed crossing there is indeed evidence
11 of existing trespassing issues and it is my opinion that a properly designed crossing
12 would greatly alleviate the issue. The north side of the proposed crossing is a residential
13 neighborhood, on the south side is over 200 acres of public land that is being converted to
14 a wetlands by the WisDOT. The crossing would provide a safer way for residents to
15 access the public lands and the future extension of the Capital City Trail.

16 In addition to the public lands and facilities that are and will be an attraction on
17 the south side of the rail corridor, the City has a public utility easement across the rail
18 right-of-way where the crossing would be located to access the public sanitary sewer
19 easement on the World Dairy site. The access would also be useful for the continuing
20 maintenance and resotation of the northern portion of the World Dairy wetlands site. As
21 water levels are raised by WisDOT to restore wetland hydrology, large portions of this
22 site become even more difficult to access from the south with maintenance vehicles used
23 by the department. Access to the site from the east is prevented by the fenced Interstate,

1 and access from the west is prevented by fenced industrial properties. Also on the
2 northern portion of the World Dairy site are electrical transmission lines owned by ATC
3 and sanitary interceptor belonging to Madison Metropolitan Sewer District.

4 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

5 A. Yes